

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1721

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: ASEC, PINS, PINT, LE, CA

SUBJ: INCIDENT AT CANADIAN EMBASSY

REF: (A) BEIRUT 1660 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH IT ENDED WITHOUT ANYBODY BEING HURT, INCIDENT AT CANADIAN EMBASSY FEB 23 HAS RAISED SERIOUS SECURITY PROBLEMS FOR CANADIANS HERE. ATTACKER AND HIS ASSISTANTS ARE VERY DETERMINED AND MIGHT TRY AGAIN IF RELEASED WITHOUT BEING DISSUADED. INCIDENT ITSELF CAME CLOSE TO TRAGEDY DUE TO COMPETITION AMONG VARIOUS SECURITY FORCES SURROUNDING THE PREMISES AS WELL AS DEADLY SERIOUS STATE OF MIND OF THE ATTACKERS. END SUMMARY.

I TOOK CANADIAN CHARGE SULLIVAN TO LUNCH YESTERDAY, FEB 24, AND RECONSTRUCTED THE ELEMENTS OF INCIDENT. MOHAMMED HAYMOUR, 45 YEARS OLD IMMIGRANT TO CANADA, HIRED FOUR COUSINS FROM THE BEKAA REPORTEDLY FOR LL50,000 AND ARMED THEM WITH KALASHNIKOV MACHINEGUNS AND OTHER WEAPONS. HE HAD CASED THE EMBASSY PROPERTY CAREFULLY AS WELL AS MOVEMENTS OF VARIOUS OFFICERS, AND WAS IN FACT IN THE EMBASSY UNTIL A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE ATTACK. HE WENT OUT, GOT HIS MEN, AND ENTERED THROUGH THE BACK STAIRCASE RATHER THAN BY ELEVATOR AFTER EMBASSY HAD CLOSED FOR BUSINESS IN EARLY AFTERNOON. CHARGE WAS WARNED BY BUZZER AND MANAGED TO CLOSE HIMSELF OFF IN SECURED AREA. HE WAS UNABLE MAKE ANY TELE-
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PHONE CALLS THROUGH OUTSIDE LINE IN HIS OFFICE, HOWEVER,

DUE TO GENERALLY BAD TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATIONS HERE.
WHEN HE CONTACTED MAIN SWITCHBOARD, RECEPITONS TOLD
HIM ARMED MEN WERE IN AND WANTED TO TALK TO HIM.

2. HAYMOUR PRESENTED ESSENTIALLY TWO DEMANDS. FIRST,
HE WANTED HIS FOUR CHILDREN BROUGHT TO LEBANON. CHILDREN
WERE IN MOTHER'S CUSTODY, AND HE ACCUSED MOTHER OF BEING
INVOLVED WITH A CANADIAN JEW. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT
SOME OF HIS BEST FRIENDS WERE JEWS AND EVEN EMBRACED
AND KISSED THE CHARGE (WHO IS NOT). HAYMOUR'S OTHER
DEMAND WAS FOR REST OF MONEY HE CLAIMED WAS OWED TO HIM
BY A PROVINCIAL CANADIAN GOVERNMENT (ALBERTA WE BELIEVE)
FOR PURCHASE OF AN ISLAND HE HAD OWNED. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE
BEEN UNJUSTLY PROSECUTED AND ACCUSED OF BEING MENTALLY
DERANGED AND WANTED RESTITUTION FOR ALL THAT. CHARGE
SYMPATHIZED AND AGREED TO FORWARD THESE DEMANDS TO
OTTAWA.

3. AFTER SEVERAL TRIES, OPEN TELEPHONE LINE WAS ESTABLISHED
WITH OTTAWA WHERE A GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE SAT IN CONTINU-
OUS SESSION. CHARGE WAS NOT ALWAYS HAPPY WITH PROMPT-
NESS OF REPLIES FROM OTTAWA BUT SAID GENERALLY SUPPORT
WAS VERY HELPFUL IN GIVING HAYMOUR IMPRESSION THAT SOME-
THING WAS BEING DONE.

4. MEANWHILE, ASSORTED SECURITY FORCES HAD GATHERED
OUTSIDE EMBASSY POINTING HEAVY WEAPONS TOWARDS IT.
SYRIAN MAJOR WHO SEEMED TO BE PRIMUS INTER PARES AMONG
THESE FORCES WAS JUMPY ABOUT HIS OWN ABILITY TO CONTROL
THEM, SINCE THEY WERE ALL VYING TO GET CREDIT FOR ENDING
THE INCIDENT. HAYMOUR HIMSELF THREATENED THAT IF THERE
WAS A SINGLE SHOT ALL HOSTAGES WOULD BE KILLED. THESE
AMOUNTED TO MORE THAN THIRTY, ALTHOUGH WOMEN AMONG
THEM WERE RELEASED BY END OF AFTERNOON. THERE WERE
LEBANESE EMPLOYEES AMONG THEM. ALONG WITH CANADIAN
OFFICERS AND CLERKS.

5. EVENTUALLY CHARGE SIGNED A PIECE OF PAPER IN WHICH
HE AGREED TO DO HIS BEST TO INVESTIGATE AND SATISFY
HAYMOUR'S DEMANDS. SIGNING OF THIS PAPER HAS STILL
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NOT BEEN PUBLICIZED HERE AND CHARGE WOULD JUST AS SOON
KEEP IT QUIET FOR THE MOMENT. IN PARALLEL NEGOTIATIONS
WITH SECURITY FORCES, HAYMOUR AND HIS MEN WERE PRO-
MISED AMNESTY AFTER INVESTIGATION FOR HIS
ACT. THEY EVENTUALLY TURNED THEMSELVES OVER SHORTLY
AFTER 9:00 P.M. AND HAVE IN TURN BEEN PUT INTO CUSTODY
OF LEBANESE JUDICIAL AND POLICE AUTHORITIES.

6. SULLIVAN'S MAIN CONCERN IS WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF AMNESTY IS HONORED SINCE HE IS NOT SURE THAT CANADIAN COURTS EVER ESTABLISHED MAN AS LEGALLY INSANE, AND HE DOES NOT BELIEVE LEBANESE CONSIDER HIM SO. IN FACT, HE APPARENTLY WAS HELD LEGALLY SANE TO STAND TRIAL NOT TOO LONG AGO IN CANADA DURING ONE OF HIS SEVERAL BRUSHES WITH THE LAW THERE. TWO OF THE APPARENT COUSINS HAVE PREVIOUS CRIMINAL RECORDS. ONE OF THE COUSINS SEEMED TO BE HIGH ON SOME KIND OF DOPE DURING THE WHOLE OPERATION. SINCE HAYMOUR SHOWED DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF CANADIANS' MOVEMENTS AND WHERE THEY LIVE, THERE ARE GROUNDS TO WORRY ABOUT HIS COMING AFTER THE CANADIANS ONCE AGAIN UNLESS SOMETHING IS DONE EITHER TO CONTROL HIM OR TO DISSUADE HIM.

7. THAT IS WHAT CHARGE AND CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WILL BE WORKING ON. CHARGE DOES NOT AT THIS STAGE INTEND TO CLOSE EMBASSY COMPLETELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH AT LEAST ONE BODY OF OPINION IN OTTAWA. HE WOULD PREFER TO INVESTIGATE POSSIBILITY OF BRINGING THE CHILDREN WITH THE MOTHER FOR A CONTROLLED VISIT TO LEBANON OR, EVEN BETTER, GETTING HAYMOUR BACK TO CANADA TO SEE HIS CHILDREN UNDER CONTROLLED CONDITIONS. HE ALSO FEELS SOMETHING COULD BE DONE TO SHOW GOODWILL IN INVESTIGATING THE MAN'S FINANCIAL CLAIMS, THOUGH WITHOUT IMPLICATION THAT THEY MAY BE MET IN ANY WAY. I BELIEVE HE IS PLANNING TO APPROACH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AS A FIRST STEP, RAISING PROBLEM OF SECURITY FOR THE EMBASSY.

8. REQUEST SULLIVAN BE PROTECTED AS SOURCE.
LAMBRAKIS

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